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MFR

OLC #78-3372
7 November 1978

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Briefing of Representative William V. Alexander
(D., Ark.) on China

X1 1. [] On Tuesday, 7 November 1978, []
X1 NFAC/OER, and [] NFAC/ORPA, briefed Representative
William V. Alexander on trade and political aspects of the
People's Republic of China. Mr. Alexander had requested the
briefing which was held in his office. I was the only other
person present.

X1 2. [] The briefing began at 9:00 a.m. with Mr. Alexander
stating that he intended to use this Congressional trip to attempt
to find out who the key decision-makers are in the Chinese
government regarding trade. He said he was specifically
interested in who could authorize a trade mission to visit his home
state (Arkansas) and who could actually sign a trade contract.
He also indicated that he is Chairman of the House Task Force on
Foreign Trade which is a group with representation from five
standing committees, Appropriations, International Relations,
Agriculture, Interstate and Foreign Commerce, and Merchant Marine
and Fisheries.

X1 3. [] briefed on China's ten-year plan and their
current and likely future need to trade for grain foods, livestock
and food technology. Mr. Alexander asked about the political
stability of the present regime and [] briefed in
response.

X1 4. [] Mr. Alexander provided a list of Chinese officials
he said he expected to meet. [] said we would see if we could
add any other names that might be pertinent. We also promised
to provide biographic information on these officials. Despite
this, we did not really satisfy Mr. Alexander's desire to identify
the people who could give him decisions on trade matters.

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Mr. Alexander said he had talked to the Foreign Agriculture Service at the Department of Agriculture and they could not identify these people either. Both [REDACTED] explained that the problem is in part the newness of China in trading with us, and in part their tendency to avoid making decisions in the open. Mr. Alexander seemed reasonably satisfied with the session which lasted about 50 minutes.

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[REDACTED]
Office of Legislative Counsel

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